

Good Shepherd Services
Annual Report 2012



Contents

Chairman’s Introduction	001
Mission Leader’s Report	002
Chief Executive’s Report	003
Projects & services 2012	005
› Edel House	007
› Riverview	013
› Bruac Eile	019
› Aftercare outreach support	025
Financial report	031
Activities	
› Carnival Day for Edel House	032
› 40th Anniversary celebration at Millennium Hall	034
› Our own “local hero” Mary Laffan	038



Chairman’s Introduction

I am pleased to welcome you to our annual report for 2012.

The year was marked by increased financial challenge, a wonderful celebration of our 40th birthday, and continued striving for improvement.

In striving to improve, we have committed ourselves to a new focus on the outcome of our efforts for the women and children whom we serve. We know that there is a need for the help that we offer: the increasing numbers coming to our doors show that. And we know that we have a highly skilled and committed team throughout our organisation. In our line of work, however, we can’t readily measure success in the way, for example, that a business might, by looking to its profitability. But the fact that outcomes in our field are harder to measure does not allow us to abandon that important task.

Through trusting relationships, we help women and children who are vulnerable to homelessness to live more fulfilled and self-sufficient lives.

That captures our mission. It’s a purpose to which our teams commit themselves 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. That being so, we are bound to ask ourselves whether we are succeeding; whether we are in fact helping the women and children whom we serve *to live more fulfilled and self-sufficient lives*; whether we might change our methods, how we might improve. Our mission doesn’t offer an easy path, and for an individual woman it’s a long path that turns back on itself from time to time. But we are committed to it, and committed also to a regular, open and honest examination of how we are doing.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our chief executive, Tony O’Riordan, our mission leader, Sr. Jane Murphy, our unit managers, and each one of our staff and our volunteers for another year of great work done with good humour. I thank also the HSE, Cork City Council, FÁS, Cork VEC, the Combined Counties Association and each of our funders and donors for their continued and greatly appreciated support.

Garvan Corkery
Chairman

Mission Leader’s Report

In October 2012 at Cork City Hall we celebrated 40 years of service to homeless women and children at Edel House who are among the most vulnerable people in the city of Cork. Marian Finucane, acclaimed national broadcaster and guest of honour, said that “homelessness is much more than not having a house...” There are something’s that matter to us all and they have to do with self esteem, safety, a sense of protection, the trust in a contact with somebody who will treat you with respect and dignity and who can basically lead you to a new hope for yourself and your family ... that is what Good Shepherd Services has been doing for 40 years.

The singleness of purpose of our mission over the past 40 years continues to inspire us today - *through trusting relationships we support women and children who are vulnerable to homelessness to live more fulfilled and self-sufficient lives.*

This clarity of mission in the minds and hearts of our staff, volunteers, friends and supporters by their welcome, resilience, generosity, commitment, compassion and good humour is at the heart of our helping improve the lives of distressed and dislocated women, teenagers and children who come to us today. We are committed to continue to improve our service, to increase our capacity and find ways to help those we serve to better themselves. We do this with the support of our voluntary and statutory friends who appreciate and assist our mission.

Sister Jane Murphy

Board of Directors and Management team of Good Shepherd Services Ltd.

Garvan Corkery - Chairman
Seamus O’Connell
Miriam De Barra
Jim Mulcahy
Ann Marie O’Sullivan
Sr Bernie Mc Nally
Paddy Caffrey

Chief Executive’s Report

“2012 - A year of celebration, challenge and achievement”

The year just past was a very special one for our service as you will come to realise as you read through the pages which follow.

Celebrations took place to mark 40 years of serving the needs of women and children who are homeless or vulnerable to homelessness.

We were strongly challenged by the on-going reductions in funding from our statutory funders but despite this we still managed to support a record number of women and children who are on the margins of society and who found themselves in difficult circumstances. “Value for money” and “doing more with less” was the constant challenge throughout the year.

Being efficient with our human resources and ensuring we responded to the needs of the vulnerable women and children we serve was challenging. I am very grateful to our managers and staff for the flexibility and responsiveness they have shown in making sure that whatever challenges arose were dealt with promptly, effectively and in a compassionate and non-judgemental fashion. Our staff still went the “extra mile” in doing their duties in spite of the difficulties our funding situation has posed for them. As always volunteers made a huge contribution to the service and I would like to thank all those who gave so generously of their time and talent directly to the service and those who helped the various fundraising initiatives throughout the year. The people we support now need more help than ever and it is gratifying to know that the increase in the numbers accessing our service were all accommodated and supported to satisfactory conclusions.

We remain fully committed to raising awareness and finding solutions to the issues that affect the lives of those women and children who are vulnerable to homelessness. These people often have a range of complex problems. They can be disadvantaged and socially excluded in terms of educational attainment, life skills and future prospects. We will continue to work hard to get the right help and support for them.

In conclusion I would like to thank our Board of Directors, Staff, Volunteers and Funders for their commitment and support and look forward to continuing our work in the future.

Tony O’Riordan
Chief Executive



Projects & Services in 2012

The number of women and children who availed of our various services is set out in the table below:-

Service	Women	Children	Total
Edel House	349	113	462
Riverview		32	32
Bruac Eile	32	3	35
Aftercare	156	79	235
Total	537	227	764

As always the needs were great but our staff worked tirelessly with each person who was in need of support. A solutions focused approach is taken to the challenges which our vulnerable client group experience and there is a strong emphasis on people assuming as much control over their own lives as possible in the quickest possible timeframe. It is not good for physical or mental health of women and children to remain in emergency accommodation for long durations.

The women and girls we work with are discouraged from adopting a “dependent” mentality. All of our support efforts are towards getting the person to assume as much responsibility for their lives as possible and building the necessary supports to maintain independent living. We work with a large number of statutory and voluntary agencies to make this happen.

Edel House 2012

Edel House 2012

The demand for emergency accommodation continued to increase during 2012. A total of 349 women and 113 children were admitted to Edel House. There were weeks during the year when we had up to fifteen children in residence which was a challenging situation for staff, mothers and children. We are particularly concerned for children who have to spend time in our emergency accommodation and we do all that we can to make their time in Edel House as pleasant as possible. If children can no longer attend the school they had been going to before becoming homeless our staff will have them enrolled in a local school. Our play therapist works with all of the children who find themselves homeless. A homework club (run by volunteers) is offered each evening to help the children complete their homework and catch up with any lost time. A playroom and children’s TV room allows children some interaction and fun.

Of the 349 women admitted 222 (64%) had substance misuse or mental health/ intellectual disabilities issues, broken down as follows:-

Alcohol	76	
Poly Drug use	65	
Heroin	11	
Prescription Meds	7	
Cannabis	1	
Total	160	(46% of women admitted)

A further 62 (18%) women had mental/physical health issues or intellectual disabilities.

Mental Health	43	
Intellectual disability	5	
Physical health issues	14	
Total	62	(18% of women admitted)

The fact that 64% of the vulnerable women we serve had either addiction or mental and physical health issues creates a very challenging environment for residents and staff. Once each resident has settled in a care plan is developed to commence her journey on the road to independent living. Initially an assessment of the most pressing needs of the woman is conducted so a targeted plan can be developed to deal with her plight. Housing is always of prime concern but frequently there are a number of other issues that need to be dealt with. Typically the type of intervention that our staff support the women and children with are:-

- Housing needs assessment
- Support with health & well-being
- Help with social welfare entitlements – rent allowance, unemployment benefit etc.
- Advocacy & Links to other social services
- Support with finding suitable accommodation
- Support with family issues – building bridges with family if there is a possibility that the person could return to their family home
- Support for children to come to terms with chaotic lifestyles
- Help in establishing personal safety & security
- Support with employment and/or education
- Practical and emotional support arising from the cause of becoming homeless
- Support with legal issues
- Support with addiction issues

Social activities

Our staff team in conjunction with Bruac Eile and the support of volunteers provide a range of activities and classes for residents throughout the year. These activities provide a source of social interaction and learning and help to break the cycle of monotony that living in a homeless shelter can bring. Activities included:-

- Computer classes
- Arts & Crafts classes
- Cookery demonstrations and classes
- Parties for significant holidays during the year
- Summer Outings – Rose of Tralee, Killarney etc.
- Bingo / DVD nights / X Factor nights
- Massage / make up evenings

Moving on

There is strong evidence to support the fact that the longer people stay in emergency accommodation the poorer their physical and mental health become. Our staff put enormous energy and effort into helping women to move to independent living as quickly as possible. The breakdown of where the women moved to is as follows:-

Moved without forwarding address	153
Returned home or to a relative or friend	85
Social Housing or private rented accommodation	80
Hospital / Treatment / Other	25
Total	343

We are noticing a significant increase in the numbers of young homeless women in the 18 to 25 age group many with children. During 2012 we accommodated 70 single women and 29 women with children in this age group which accounts for 29% of residents. This is a concerning trend, one which is echoed by other emergency accommodation providers. We are working with all of the available support agencies to correct this problem but the lack of suitable affordable housing is proving to be a major stumbling block.

Staff Team:-

Manager	Esther Doolan
Social Care Team Leaders	Carol O’Donohoe Ruth O’Driscoll Clare Harrington Elaine Finn
Social Care Staff	Kitty Harrington Buckley Orlaith Hand Mairead O’Sullivan Sile O’Connell Jefferies Kelly Molyneaux Kathy Dargan Deirdre Healy Clodagh O’Donohoe
Play Therapist	Laura Dowling

A place I called home

I sit around and wonder but think of the things ye have done for me over such a short period of time. I never thought recovery was possible I thought it would take a while but I meet the angels of Edel hotel and ye changed it all.

Even though I might be gone I still know the love and support ye give will continue on for many years the amount of lives ye change has to be a sign from somewhere.

Sometimes I close my eyes and breathe in the sweet moments of a place I once called home it’s a turning point for most a fresh start for others but to people like me it means everything.

Everybody that knows about it always has a smile; it has an amazing standing ovation the best part of the time. To some it’s a place to shine to others it’s just for wasting time but to me it was home a fun safe secure home that was there all the time.

I fell apart a few times and with just a few words from staff somehow it seemed to fix whatever was wrong. Ye reach into the weakest moments and remind us that were strong.

I would be a fool to see or even worse to forget ye because ye changed it all ye made it all worthwhile.

Thanks for everything ye have done for me

Riverview 2012

Riverview 2012

Riverview in partnership with the HSE South continued the provision of residential care to teenagers who are out of home for a period of time. A trend which had emerged in the last year or so was that a number of teenagers, on reaching eighteen were found to be poorly equipped with the skills necessary for independent living. When children reach their eighteenth birthday they are no longer entitled to state support. These children may have spent a considerable amount of their lives in foster care or residential services and care facilities. This group are particularly vulnerable to homelessness because of their lack of a family support network and the difficult lives they have lived. Responding to this need the management and staff at Riverview reviewed the purpose and function of the service and have initially made two places available for girls in the eighteen to nineteen age group on a pilot basis. The staff have put together a care package and training support to equip this group to have the social and life skills to live independently and sustain themselves in living independently.

There were 32 admissions to Riverview during the year and the breakdown and age profile of the service users is as follows:

- *Number emergency placements* 24
- *Number of medium term placements:* 6
- *Over 18's Placements* 2

Age Profile	
14 year old	1
15 year old	1
16 year old	8
17 year old	20
18 year old	1
19 year old	1

The girls who used the service moved on to the following accommodation settings:-

Returned home to family member	11
High Support unit	4
Treatment Centre	2
Medium term placement Riverview	5
Supported accommodation	5
Other accommodation	1
Foyer	1
Still in residence (2013)	3

Activities in 2012

An eight week Being Well Course was facilitated by staff from Riverview and Aftercare. A total of six participants engaged with the programme, comprising of past residents of Riverview and Aftercare. This course ran over eight week period and covered the areas of nutrition, exercise, stress and positive change.

The group has continued to meet on a weekly basis in Riverview since the end of the course. They engage in group led activities such as cooking, exercise, self-care and a book club where the young women discuss topical books.

- Riverview Staff engaged with the girls and women who attend Bruac Eile by providing activities for the young people in:-
 - Dance and exercise
 - Movie club
 - Yoga
- Riverview staff organised a Family Fun Day in St. Peter’s Park in April. A most enjoyable day was had by all those who attended and some much needed funds for the service were raised.
- An awareness initiative programme on homelessness and its causes commenced in the second level schools with transition year pupils. This proved to be a real eye opener for the students and challenged many of the stereotypes that young people had about the topic. Interactive sessions took place following a brief presentation which brought the reality of homelessness into the classroom.
- Staff trained in Solution Focused Brief Therapy. This has been incorporated into our Key work sessions with the young people and is proving to be very beneficial.
- As a result of having residents who are over 18 years old staff have developed some new support information and now work with the adult services regarding housing and other entitlements.
- The development of an activity room/ family room at Riverview presented opportunities for group work and other activities.
- Cooking evenings are held twice weekly where the girls plan the menu, purchase the food and prepare and cook the meal. This is a valuable activity which prepares people for independent living.
- Staff continue to link in with the Aftercare Service offering the young people support as they move on.

Henrietta’s Girls Club

2012 saw us enter our eleventh year of providing this service. Riverview and the HSE office at Liberty Street House jointly promote and run this club to provide activities for young women on Wednesday evenings. We continue to try and reinvent ourselves in meeting the needs of the young women who attend the club. Our activities during the year included hair, makeup and nail care classes which always prove to be very popular. Cookery classes were also organised and some trips to the cinema took place. Jewellery making is always a big hit especially around the seasons of Christmas and Easter as the girls can present their work as gifts for family and friends. We plan to look at how we have been operating and investigate some new concepts and ideas in 2013.

Staff Team:-

Manager	Liz Lowe
Social Care Team Leaders	Helene Marriott Orla Donovan Kristine Grace Catherine O'Sullivan
Social Care Staff	Elizabeth McNamara Doreen McCarthy Sarah Quinn Vicky Moloney Hazel Hanrahan Eva Rivera

Bruac Eile 2012

Bruac Eile 2012

In 2012, Bruac Eile completed its first full year in its new premises in Redemption Road. Thirty five girls took part in education, training and development programmes during the year. Courses were offered in the core skills of literacy, numeracy, budgeting and computer skills. A lot of work was done in the personal development area covering topics such as personal effectiveness, sexual health, nutrition and well-being. Other skills for independent living offered were in areas such as cookery, parenting skills, arts & crafts and interior design.

A number of girls took part in a work experience module where CV preparation, interview skills, work seeking and work experience were part of the training. A comprehensive training and development programme was offered in a much improved centre.

Profile of the women and girls who attend the centre

A total of 35 girls enrolled in the programme and in excess of 50% of these were accessing homeless services or were in foster care when they commenced their training and development. The remainder of the girls and women had a history of homelessness or mental health issues or suffered from substance abuse difficulties. Six of the girls were from a traveller background and three were under sixteen years of age. A snapshot of the complex issues they faced in their lives include:-

- 43% had problematic substance misuse issues (alcohol, weed, prescription medications)
- 29% were on prescribed medication for psychiatric or mental health problems
- 14% were fifteen year olds referred by Education and Welfare Officers
- 14% were involved in violent relationships
- 9% had been expelled from Youthreach

The complex lives of the learner poses a unique challenge in getting engagement in the education and training process. The tutors as always worked extremely hard to bring about radical change in the lives of the trainees and there were many successful outcomes and personal milestones achieved over the course of the year.

Official Opening by Minister Kathleen Lynch

The 26th March was a day of special celebration for the staff and learners at the centre. The official opening of the centre was carried out by Minister Kathleen Lynch and a number of distinguished guests joined us for the occasion. Bishop John Buckley opened the proceedings by blessing the centre and offering prayers for the success of all who work and study in Bruac Eile. We were delighted to welcome such distinguished guests as Darragh Murphy TD, Gerry Buttimer TD and Mr Ted Owens, CEO of the City of Cork Vocational Education Committee to name but a few.

Becky Lynch, a learner at the centre presented Minister Lynch with a beautiful piece of her own artwork. A large selection of arts and crafts made by the students was on display throughout the centre and many of the visitors commented on the high quality of the items. Guests were invited to view each room in the centre and interact with the learners to obtain a flavour of their experience of training at Bruac Eile.

Food on the day was prepared and served by the trainees, an exercise which offered an opportunity to put their cookery and personal development training into practice. A very pleasant day was rounded off as a social gathering with great interaction between learners, staff and guests.



Staff Team:-

Manager	Charlotte O'Donovan
Co-ordinator	Geraldine Grant
Tutors	Mary Ronan Mary Wallace Sharon Twomey B'Anne Farrell

Volunteering at Bruac

I started volunteering at Bruac Eile about 18 months ago after I saw an article in the Evening Echo about Good Shepherd Services. I suppose I was looking for something to get me out of the house as I had been at home with the kids for about 8 years.

I rang Edel House who put me in contact with Bruac Eile as mornings suited me while the kids were at school. Charlotte asked me to call up for the coffee break one morning. Of course it was intimidating walking into a group I didn't know but there was a lovely, homely atmosphere and I'm a sucker for a homemade scone!

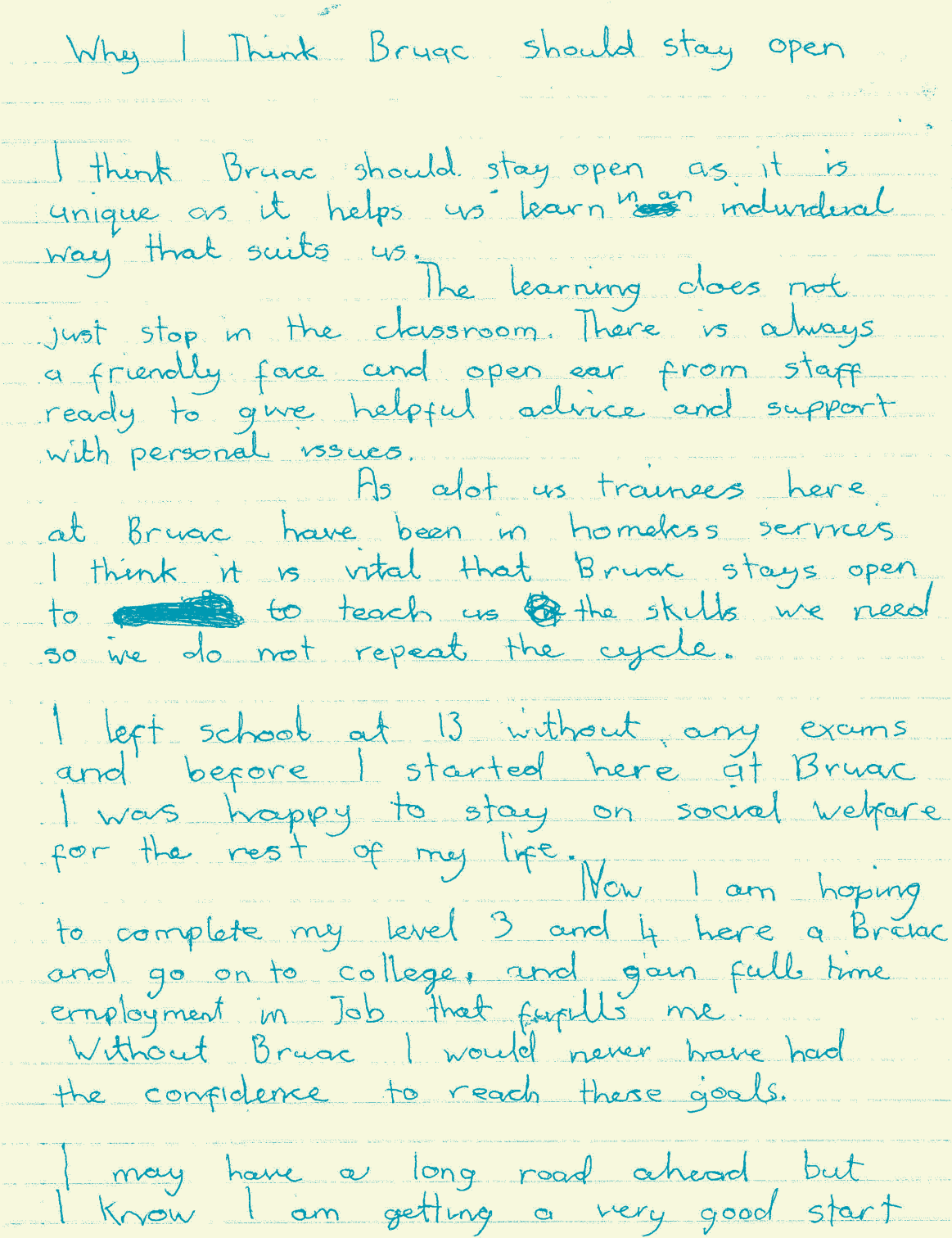
I started the following week doing literacy work on a one to one basis. I then did the Work Experience Fetac level 4 module with a group of three and am currently teaching the Career Preparation Fetac level 3 to a few of the girls. I enjoy meeting the girls and having a chat before we do some work and they are always lovely and respectful especially on a one to one basis. The Fetac system is impressive as a building block to further education and although at times I am sure career planning is the furthest thing from the girl's minds it does give us a chance to take time to make a plan and maybe plant a seed for the future.

The staff in Bruac Eile are patient, caring, fair and tolerant. I think it must be difficult for them when the girls leave before finishing their course but hopefully the progress they made will be continued at a later stage. I am sure they know the door is always open for them if they would like to return.

I always enjoy my morning at Bruac Eile. Sometimes I leave with a heavy heart when I hear stories of the chaotic lifestyles that people take as the norm. I always think one of the saddest things must be to have your children put into care. It brings home how circumstances can vary so much in society and an awful lot depends on the family you're born into.

Overall I hope I am more of a help than a hindrance! Thanks for giving me the opportunity to work with the Good Shepherd Services.

Carolyn O'Regan



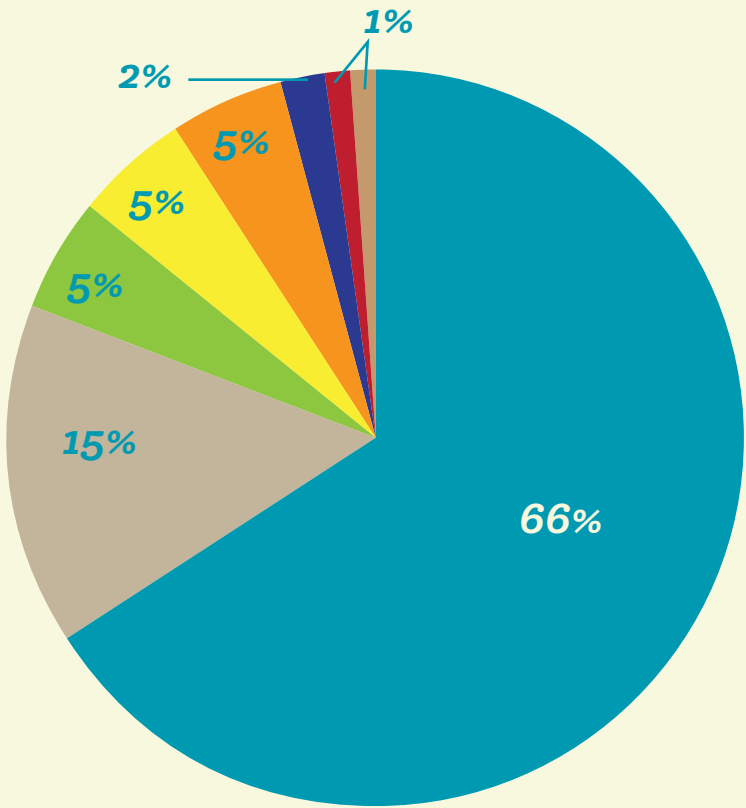
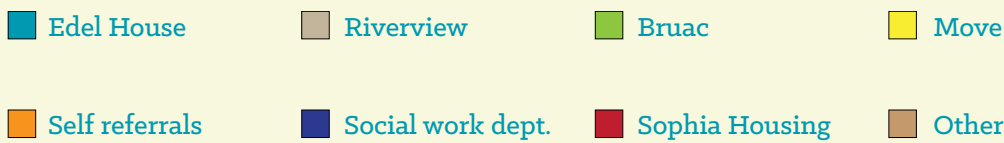


Aftercare 2012

Our Aftercare / Outreach team supported a total of 320 women and children during 2012. The number of women supported by the service was 156 and there were 164 children in their care. Almost half of the women referred were in the age group 20 to 29 (detailed graph of age profile below).

New referrals were received from 82 women and 67 children. The majority of the referrals come from Edel House and Riverview. The source of these new referrals is shown in the graph below:

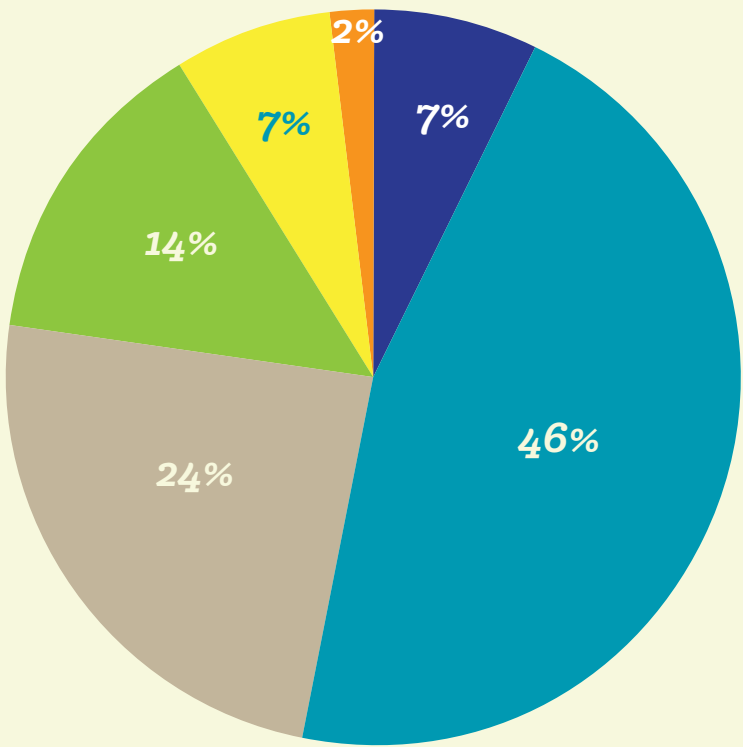
New Referrals 2012



The age profile of the women supported breaks down as:

Age Profile of Women

17-19 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69

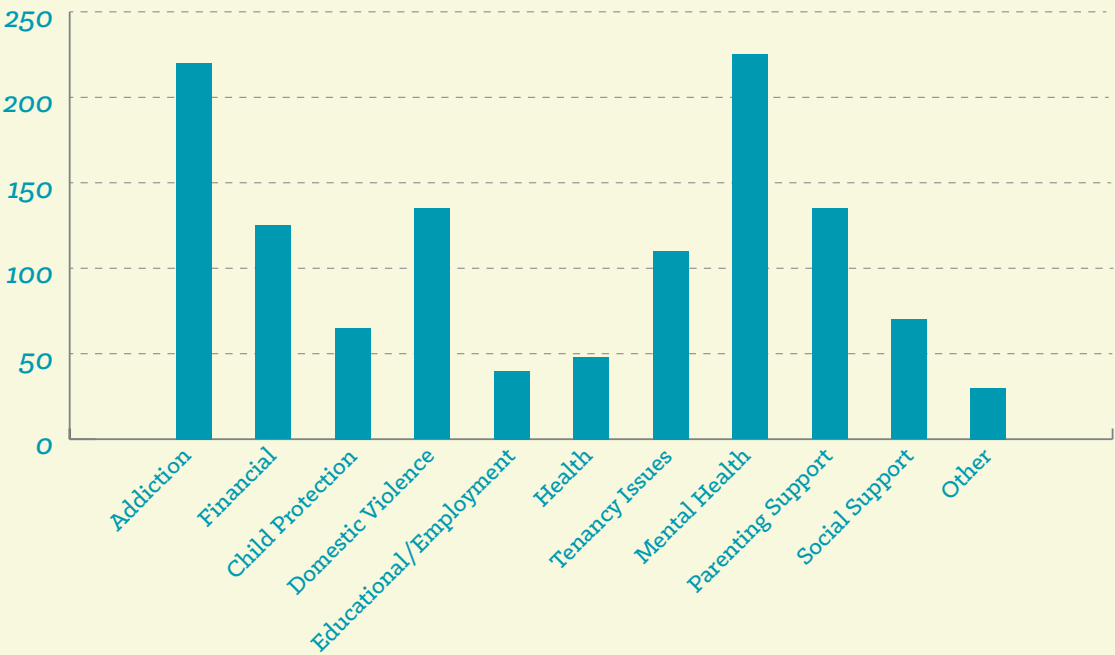


The Team had 11,136 contacts with the women we supported consisting of face to face support, phone contact and text messaging. The areas covered include: advocacy, emotional and practical support, information and advice, counselling, court accompaniment, support with child protection issues, social outings and training courses.

2593 contacts were made with other services and professionals on behalf of these vulnerable women and their children.

The Aftercare Team supported the women and children with a number of issues. The major problems of this vulnerable group were mental health, addiction, domestic violence, financial difficulties, tenancy support issues and parenting support. A full breakdown of presenting issues is outlined on the page across:

Presenting Issues



Services and Training

The Team befriended the women they serve in a number of ways, offering a mix of social and training events. Some of the activities delivered included:

- Weekly drop in coffee morning
- Weekly literacy and English classes
- Subsidised counselling services
- Parenting courses which were offered both on an individual and group basis
- Being Well Training
- Sexual Health Education
- Three week Summer Scheme for children aged 5 – 14
- Social outings

Aftercare Staff Team

Manager: Linda Mulcahy

Social Workers: Ailish Walsh
Catherine Drake
Marguerite Dwyer
Emma Barry

Case Study

Client L is a woman know to our service for 15 years. Her initial referral was to Edel House due to difficulties maintaining her tenancy. She has a learning difficulty and has required on-going support with housing, parenting, health and emotional needs.

Key Challenges Faced

- Woman had accumulated considerable rent arrears
- She has a learning disability & literacy problems
- She has a number of on-going health issues and concerns
- Her three children are in the care of HSE
- Her adult son recently died

Intervention with General Issues

- Application for Threshold housing completed with woman
- Assisted and supported through the Threshold pre-tenancy process
- Prepared application for Disability Allowance
- Assisted in dealing with other professionals and services
- Provided support around scheduling appointments and dealing with communications
- Referred for one on one literacy tuition
- Supported in organising and attending medical appointments
- Advocated on behalf of woman with the Social Work Department
- Supported and accompanied her to court in relation to statutory care orders
- Accompanied woman to statutory childcare review meetings
- Encouraged engagement in social and training events run at the Aftercare Service

Intervention relating to Client's Bereavement

- Support in dealing with her sudden loss and resulting grief
- Assisted woman in relaying the news to her other children and family members
- Assistance in contacting her son's previous foster family and involving them in the funeral services
- Assisted in organising her son's funeral services
- Liaised with Community Welfare Officer in relation to application for death grant
- Advocated with St Vincent de Paul in relation to funeral costs
- Assisted organisation of venue and refreshments after the funeral
- Accompanied woman and her children at all parts of funeral service

Outcomes

- Sustaining a tenancy with Threshold with payments up to date
- Disability Allowance being paid
- Attending literacy classes in the Aftercare Service
- Now has regular access with her children
- She attends Aftercare coffee morning
- Dealing with the loss of her son in an open and healthy fashion

Experiences of a Social Work student

My name is Claudia O'Leary and I am in my second year of a Masters in Social Work in UCC. Previous to this I completed an Honours degree in Social Care from the Institute of Technology Tralee. During my time in Tralee I gained experience in family support and also working with children with Intellectual disabilities. From this work I gained a wide range of experience which aided my decision to pursue a career in social work.

In the first year of the MSW the first semester consisted of lectures and essay submissions. At the beginning I found this tough as it was hard to get back into the swing of writing essays and attending lectures, but I soon found my feet and felt it got easier as it became a lot clearer what was expected of me to complete the course. Following on from this, in the second semester I began a 14 week placement which really interested me as I would be getting hands on experience as opposed to long lectures! My first placement was with the Good Shepherd Services Aftercare Team in Henry Street (Cork city centre). Before starting I didn't have any experience with homelessness but I was looking forward to getting stuck in and learning more about this issue.

Beginning placement I felt a little nervous and excited as I didn't know what was ahead of me and what would be expected of me. The nerves soon disappeared when I met the very friendly outreach team led by Linda Mulcahy, who is a qualified social worker. Starting placement I didn't have a lot of experience in the area of homelessness but quickly learned that homelessness is a very complex issue and can in some cases be coupled with a lot of other issues such as mental health, addiction and domestic violence. Becoming a part of the team I quickly got to know some of the women and children who use this service, and worked independently with women supporting them with issues such as parenting support, mental health and addiction. A lot of my work involved emotional support around issues the clients were faced with and practical assistance such as sourcing accommodation and advocating on behalf of women by liaising with other professionals and agencies that the women are involved with. I really enjoyed this part of the placement as I felt I was really supporting the women who use the service on a practical level. I also got to assist with a coffee morning every week which offered a space for clients to engage with the service for support and provided a space to meet with friends in a less formal and light-hearted manner.

Upon reflection of my time with the Good Shepherd Services I learned and gained valuable practical experience working with people in the homeless sector. I learned through the use of regular supervision that it is essential to apply theory to your practice as social work is complex and involves working with a variety of different issues. This placement gave me a great opportunity to apply my own knowledge and theory of social work in a practical way. During my 14 weeks of placement I was so lucky to be able to build and maintain positive relationships with a network of people from the team itself to the women and children and the professionals and agencies that the women of the service are linked in with. This is a valuable learning tool that I will take with me in life as well as on my next placement.



Financial Report 2012

Income

Donations and fundraising	137,515
Grants	1,934,238
Rent	58,884
Miscellaneous	45,271
Total	2,175,908

Expenditure

Payroll	1,806,495
Utilities	46,374
Professional Fees	22,178
Miscellaneous Expenditure	121,115
Depreciation	73,707
Repairs & Maintenance	61,151
Household Expenditure	62,711
Total	2,193,731
Surplus/Deficit for year	-17,823

These figures are a summary version of the information contained in our audited accounts.

Carnival Day at Edel House - 22nd April 2012

An enjoyable and fun day out for families was held in St. Peter's Park on Sunday 22nd April. The park was transformed into a bright and colourful arena with lots of activities and food stalls. Music was provided by Mayfield Brass and Reed Band whose selection of lively tunes set a festive air to proceedings. There were circus performers, a magician and a special guest appearance by Alvin and the Chipmunks which caused great excitement when they performed.

A kids corner with face painting, bouncy castles and various other activities were kept busy for the afternoon. The Animal Road Show with a wide variety of animals and reptiles kept children fascinated as they were allowed to hold and be photographed with snakes, torantuallas among other things. A great day out was had by all and sincere thanks to all who assisted on the day but particularly to Doreen and Helene from Riverview who were the prime organisers of the event.



Helene and Doreen



Kids Corner



Charlotte and Esther keeping a watchful eye over the display of cupcakes



Mayfield Brass and Reed Band



David and Tony O'Riordan



Liz Lowe at the Bric-a-brac stall

Forty years of Good Shepherd Services Celebration

Wednesday the 5th October 2012 was the day marked for our main celebration function to mark forty years of providing services to vulnerable adolescents, women and children. The venue was Millennium Hall beside City Hall in Eglinton Street. Our special guest on the occasion was the talented RTE broadcaster Marian Finucane. We were delighted and extremely grateful that Marian accepted our invitation to attend and to host a round table discussion with four women who have given significant dedication to our service in that period.

Our Guest of Honour was Sister Colette Hickey who at 94 years young entertained all present with interesting, funny and poignant stories about her time in the service which she founded in 1972. She described how having lived her religious life in an almost enclosed order she was requested by her Superior to go down to the Mardyke to take charge of a night shelter with virtually no knowledge of the city centre. Her previous excursions out of the convent had never been further than the post office in Sundays Well.

The other panel members were Sister Noreen O'Shea, Ms Martina Deasy and Sister Jane Murphy. Each of these recounted events and anecdotes about their time in the service and the picture of forty years of supporting vulnerable women and children was brought to life through the insightful questioning of Marian Finucane. As always, Marian conducted the interview in her own inimitable way.

Proceedings commenced with an opening prayer by Bishop John Buckley. The cities Lord Mayor, Councillor John Buttimer addressed the audience next and paid tribute to the organisation and the contribution it makes to some of the city's most vulnerable women and children. He explained how his colleagues in City Hall had told him that very day that Good Shepherd Services approach to managing homelessness was "best practice" in its field.

After the panel discussion Ms Finucane presented long serving staff members and volunteers with awards to mark their long standing commitment to homeless services. Those who received awards were:-

Staff members

Kitty Harrington Buckley

Carol O'Donohoe

Elizabeth McNamara

Elizabeth Lowe

Chrissy Burke

Volunteers

Alma Hegarty

Carmel O'Herlihy

Kay O'Mahony

There were three staff members who were unable to make it on the night who were subsequently presented with their awards – Mary Ronan, Tosca Bernardi and Orlaith Hand.

A presentation was also made to Mr Pat Foley who had stepped down as chairman in 2011 to mark his many years of dedication and support to the service. Sister Jane read a citation in his honour and Marian presented him with a 5,600 year old bog sculpture to mark the occasion.

The proceedings were brought to a close with an address by Mr Garvan Corkery the current Chairman of the Board. Garvan spoke of the organisations vision, mission and purpose and thanked the staff, volunteers and board for their on-going commitment and dedication to the vulnerable of our city. He also paid tribute to the HSE, City Council, FAS, the Gardai, Combined Counties Association, fundraisers, supporters and all who contributed to the organisation and occasion.

A special thank you was reserved for Ms Joan Lucey of Vibes & Scribes who sponsored the evening's events.



Sr Noreen O'Shea, Sr Colette Hickey, Sr Jane Murphy and Ms. Martina Deasy



Marian Finucane



Garvan Corkery



Tony O'Riordan, Marian Finucane and Kay O'Mahony



Sr Jane Murphy, Sr Noreen O'Shea, Sr Colette Hickey, Marian Finucane and Tony O'Riordan



Tony O'Riordan, Marian Finucane and Carmel O'Herlihy



Tony O'Riordan, Sr Jane Murphy, Marian Finucane and Pat Foley



Vicki Moloney and Catherine O'Sullivan



Tony O'Riordan, Marian Finucane and Alma Hegarty

Local hero

LOCAL HERO

Every month we highlight someone who is a hero in their community

Christmas is one of the hardest times of the year to be homeless, and with many people facing escalating debts and rising costs, more women than ever are at risk of losing their homes. Edel House in Cork is a residential centre for girls, women and children who are homeless. The shelter can house 24 women and nine mothers with their children. Esther Doolin, Manager at Edel House, says they get women from all sorts of backgrounds using their services. "Some women come to us because of domestic violence, others because of family conflict or from having been evicted, and we also have clients who have drug and alcohol issues."

Esther nominated volunteer Mary Laffan as a local hero because of the hard work she does at the centre. "We have about 20 volunteers, but we are trying to increase that number. Mary has a very particular bond with the women, she's very welcoming and befriends them. She's a good role model for them and gives up her time freely, as do all of our volunteers."

Mary, who lives in Cloyne, said she was delighted to hear she was chosen as a Local Hero. "I didn't expect it," she laughed. "I cook down in the kitchen with the women every Wednesday. I make dinner and desert, or I could be answering the phone or the door. I'm a chef by trade and I decided to do some voluntary work."

Mary's daughter Jennifer works as a social care worker and heard about opportunities for volunteers at Edel House. "I wasn't working and I asked her if they were looking for volunteers. She spoke to Esther and they were recruiting volunteers at the time. I had an induction course which lasted a few weeks. I was a bit apprehensive when I started, but I love it now. I'd miss it if I didn't come in every week."

Having worked as a chef for over 20 years, Mary has been able to share her skills with the women who often have little knowledge on preparing meals. "When I came to volunteer they asked, 'What would you have to give?' I said I can cook and offered to do cooking for the women. Some of the women don't know how to cook and there are foods they never had because of the situation they were living in. To get a shepherd's pie or a stew is a big treat for them. A few times the kids would come into the kitchen and we'd make stuff like Rice

"I was a bit apprehensive when I started, now I'd miss it if I didn't come in every week"

Krispie buns or help make apple tarts. "The women will chat away and tell you their stories when you're cooking with them. Then when you sit down afterwards to have their dinner we all have a chat. Some want to talk about their problems and some don't."

"You hear some shocking stories, all the women are here for different reasons. They trust me and ask for me if I don't get in one week. You get friendly with them and I get on well with the women. Lots come and go and I see them in the city and they'd stop and tell you how they're getting on."

With Christmas coming, the women at Edel House have been learning how to make food for the season with Mary.

"I am making mince pies coming up to Christmas with the women and the kids. On Christmas day the staff and volunteers cook dinner for the women and they have a party and Santa comes and gives the children presents. It's lovely."

Mary enjoys volunteering and looks forward to her time at Edel House. "I would really recommend volunteering. Volunteering keeps my mind active and I feel like I'm giving something to people, and I get something back myself like satisfaction which is a great feeling. Edel House is happy place. The staff are lovely and really make you feel welcome. I just turned 50 and the girls cooked me a lovely



lunch and gave me a cake and everything. I was really surprised, I didn't expect it. If it was closer to home I'd do more days. I think it's a great facility for the women to be able to come here rather than sleeping on the streets. It's a fabulous place for them."

To find out more about Edel House or how to volunteer with them visit www.goodshepherdservices.ie or tel: 021 427 4240.

DO YOU KNOW
SOMEONE WHO
IS A LOCAL
HERO?

Why not tell us about them. Every local hero receives a €100 Lidl shopping voucher and a signed copy of Lidl's Home Cooking, containing 80 delicious recipes compiled by Johann and Tom Doorley. To nominate someone, write to us about why they deserve to be featured in *Woman's Way*. Email awilliams@harmonia.ie or write to us at *Local Hero, Woman's Way, Harmonia, Rosemount House, Dundrum Road, Dublin 14*.

www.facebook.com/lidlireland

Home Cooking

*Caring for the needs of homeless girls,
women and children*

CHY No. 13399
Revenue Authorised No. 432

GOOD SHEPHERD SERVICES
Convent Avenue, Sunday's Well, Cork.
T 021 4309505 F 021 4305250
Email gsscork@eircom.net

EDEL HOUSE
Residential Centre, Grattan Street, Cork.
T 021 4274240
Email edelhouse@gsscork.ie

BRUAC
Hearth, Redemption Road, Cork.
T 021 4397314
Email bruac@gsscork.ie

RIVERVIEW
Residential Centre, 3 North Mall, Cork.
T 021 4304205
Email riverview@gsscork.ie

AFTERCARE SERVICE
Training Centre, Henry Street, Cork.
T 021 4273890
Email aftercare@gsscork.ie

www.goodshepherdservices.ie